

News Release
For Immediate Release
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Governor Huntsman Signs Declaration for Agriculture Disaster

Salt Lake City, Utah – Utah Governor Jon M. Huntsman, Jr., today signed a Declaration of Agricultural Disaster for Washington and Iron Counties. The declaration sets in motion an official request for assistance from the United States Secretary of Agriculture for appropriate funding to be made available to each impacted landowner in each county.

“This is a situation where irrigation systems have been washed out and farm areas are now covered with debris and sediment,” said Governor Huntsman. “Without assistance soon, there will be a loss of valuable crops this year.”

According to the Farm Service Agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, damage estimates are approximately \$5 million. The extremely high water levels on the Virgin River, Santa Clara River, Ash Creek and Shoal Creek left more than 5,000 acres of land covered with debris and sediment. The flooding waters also damaged earthen and concrete ditches, concrete and metal pipelines, wheel lines, and other irrigation water delivery systems. A small number of farms had their soils eroded away and now the farmlands are part of a new river channel.

“We are pleased that Governor Huntsman has signed the declaration,” said Utah Agriculture Commissioner Leonard Blackham. “We hope this will help expedite the financial aid and other assistance from the Federal Government.”

A response from the Secretary of Agriculture is anticipated within the next 30 days. Most of the aid would be in the form of low interest loans from the USDA.

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